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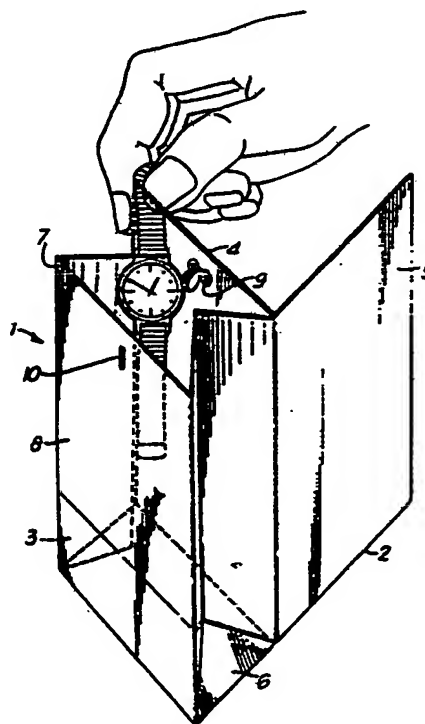
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(54) Title: INTEGRAL GREETING CARD AND PACKAGE

(57) Abstract

An integral greeting card and package (1) has a card portion (2) in the form of a conventional greeting card and a package portion (3). The card portion (2) and package portion (3) are integral and may be either unitary or securely connected together. The package portion (3) substantially corresponds in shape and size in two dimensions with the card portion (2), when folded. In this way a convenient and aesthetically pleasing greeting card and package are provided which cannot be inadvertently separated.



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INTEGRAL GREETING CARD AND PACKAGE

The present invention is directed to an integral greeting card and package or container for use for example as a gift for a birthday or other celebrated occasion.

Traditionally signed greeting cards are given for example on a birthday, on the occasion of a marriage, or on the birth of a child. A gift is also often given separately. This has the disadvantage that when the gift and greeting card are given at a celebration where other gifts are being given, the signed card may be separated from the gift making it difficult for the person receiving the gift to identify the person having made the gift. In addition, when very small or thin gifts are given such gifts may be enclosed within the greeting card. This has the disadvantage that once the card has been opened there is nothing to hold the gift within the greeting card and there is the risk that the gift may fall unnoticed from the card and be lost.

The present invention seeks to overcome the above identified disadvantages and seeks to provide a convenient, simple and aesthetically pleasing manner of giving a greeting card and a gift.

The present invention provides an integral greeting card and container comprising a greeting card of the type being foldable and a container substantially conforming in two dimensions to the shape and size of the greeting card when folded and being integral with a portion of the greeting card.

Thus, with the present invention when in use the greeting card which may be signed by the person giving the gift and the gift, within the container, cannot be separated without the gift being physically removed from the container.

It will be understood that reference to the greeting card and container being integral is intended to refer to the greeting card and container being unitary or being securely connected together.

In a preferred embodiment of the present invention the container is in the form of a bag having an opening at a top edge of the greeting card and having means for securely closing the bag. Additionally, the bag may be foldable from a flat position, when the bag is folded against the rear of the greeting card, to an open position, when the bag is unfolded to receive a gift to be placed within the bag.

In an alternative preferred embodiment the container is in the form of a box having at least a base and a plurality of side walls. The box may be conformed so as to be able to contain a bottle.

An envelope may also be provided with the present invention into which the integral greeting card and container may be inserted for use, for example, when the integral greeting card and container are to be posted.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention,

Fig. 2 is a side view of the integral greeting card

and container of Figure 1 with the container in its open position,

Fig. 3 is a further side view of the integral greeting card and container with the container in its folded position,

Fig. 4 shows an envelope and the integral greeting card and container according to the present invention,

Figs. 5 and 6 show an alternative embodiment of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention,

Figs. 7 and 8 show a further alternative embodiment of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention,

Figs. 9 and 10 show a fourth embodiment of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention,

Figs. 11 and 12 show a fifth embodiment of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention, and

Figs. 13 to 17 show a sixth embodiment of an integral greeting card and container according to the present invention.

With reference to the accompanying drawings an integral greeting card and container 1 is shown having a greeting card portion 2 and a container or package portion 3. The greeting card portion 2 is in the form of a conventional greeting card. The greeting card portion 2 has a fold line dividing the greeting card portion 2 in two. Thus, the greeting card portion 2 has a first wall 4 on which a message and/or the signature of the person giving the card may be written and a second wall 5 connected to the first wall 4 along the fold line. The second wall 5 is foldable between a first covering position when the second wall 5 obscures the message and/or signature written on the first wall 4 and a second open position when the message and/or signature is visible on the first wall 4. The second wall 5 is often decorated on its outer surface and the first wall 4 commonly has a preprinted message.

The package portion 3 is provided on the rear of the first wall 4. In the embodiment of Figs. 1 to 3 the package portion 3 is adhered to the first wall 4 of the greeting card portion 2. However, it will be understood that the package portion 3 may be attached to the first wall 4 in any secure manner or may be formed as a unitary piece with the greeting card portion 2. The package portion 3 is in the form of a bag 6 which is openable at an upper edge 7 and has a fixed bag wall connected to or unitary with the first wall 4 and a free bag wall 8. The bag 6 is foldable between a flat position when the bag 6 is folded with its free bag wall 8 adjacent the first wall 4 of the greeting card portion 2 and an open position when the bag 6 is expanded so that its free bag wall 8 is distant from the first wall 4 of the greeting card portion 2 and the bag 6 is open along its upper edge 7. The open and closed positions of the bag 6 may be more clearly seen in Figs. 2 and 3.

The bag 6 substantially conforms to the shape and size of the greeting card portion 2 in two dimensions when folded. That is, the width and height of the bag 6 are substantially equal to the width and height of the first wall 4 of the greeting card portion 2.

Adjacent the upper edge 7 of the bag 6 means for securing the bag 6 closed is provided in the form of a tab 9. the tab 9 is attached to the fixed bag wall of the bag 6 and a hole 10 is provided in the free bag wall 8 of the bag 6 through which the tab 9 may pass in order to secure the bag 6 closed.

An envelope 11 is shown in Fig. 4 which is conformed so as to receive the integral greeting card and container 1 and may be used to send the integral greeting card and container through the post.

When in use, the greeting card portion 2 may be signed by the person giving the gift and a message to the receiver of the gift may be included. The bag 6 is then opened and the gift placed inside the bag 6 which is then closed by passing the tab 9 through the hole 10 and then folding the tab 9. The integral greeting card and container may also be placed within an envelope 11 as shown in Fig. 4. Since the package portion 3 is unitary with or securely connected to the greeting card portion 2 the two cannot be separated and so the identity of the giver of the gift may not inadvertently be lost. Furthermore, since the package portion 3 is in the form of a closable bag 6 the risk of the gift within the bag being lost is substantially reduced.

Alternative integral greeting cards and containers are shown in Figs. 5 to 17 in which the package portion 3 is in the form of a box having at least a base and a plurality of side walls. In Figs. 5 and 6 an integral greeting card and container 1 is shown in which a slot 10 is provided on the free bag wall 8. The package portion 3 is closed by a lid which folds over the upper open edges of the package portion 3. The free edge of the lid bears a tab 9 which may be inserted into the slot 10 and is shaped so as to securely hold the lid of the package portion 3 in position. In Figs. 7 and 8 the integral greeting card and container 1 is not provided with a hole or slot 10. Instead, the package portion 3 has a lid which may be folded over the top of the upper open edges of the package portion 3. The package portion 3 is also provided with side flaps 11 which may be folded over the opening of the package 3 such that a tab 9 on the free edge of the lid may be inserted into the opening of the package portion 3 and is held in position by the free wall 8 of the package portion 3 and the side flaps 11. In Figs. 9 and 10 the package portion 3 is secured in a similar manner to that of Figs. 5 and 6. In Figures 11

and 12 the lid of the package portion 3 has a plurality of folds 12, five are shown in Fig. 11. A similar number of slots 10 are provided in the free wall 8 of the package portion 3. Thus, with the integral greeting card and container 1 shown in Figures 11 and 12, the package portion 3 can be closed in five different positions allowing greater or lesser space within the package portion 3.

In Figs. 13 to 17 a combined greeting card and container 1 is shown particularly suitable for use when the gift to be given is a bottle of wine, for example. The package portion 3 is conformed or sized so as to be able to contain a standard size bottle of wine. The card portion 2 is similarly sized in two dimensions so that when viewed from the front the card portion 2 obscures the package portion 3 behind. The package portion 3 also has a lid along an upper edge for closing the package portion 3 once the bottle is inside. It may also be seen that the second wall 5 of the card portion 2 has a tab 13 and a corresponding slot 14 is provided along an edge of the first wall 4 which forms the fixed wall of the package portion 3. With larger integral greeting cards and containers 1 it has been found that the card portion 2 does not always remain closed when desired. Therefore, the tab 13 and slot 14 are provided to ensure that the card portion 2 can be held closed when desired by inserting the tab 13 through the slot 14.

It will be appreciated that other shapes and sizes of integral greeting cards and containers 1 can be provided for particularly sized gifts, for example where the gift is a book, a video tape, a compact disc, a tape cassette etc.

Each of the integral greeting cards and containers shown in Figs. 1 to 17 may be made from, for example, stiff card

and preferably are made from one sheet of card appropriately cut and folded. Moreover, the integral greeting cards and containers 1 may be stored flat and then opened out when in use. The different integral greeting cards and containers shown in the Figures therefore have different means and fold lines for permitting the integral greeting cards and packages to be stored flat.

Other shapes and arrangements of containers connected to or unitary with the greeting card portion, for example an envelope, may be used without departing from the present invention. Moreover, other means for securely closing the package portion may be used instead of the tab and holes, for example a drawstring.

CLAIMS

1. An integral greeting card and container comprising a greeting card of the type being foldable and a container substantially conforming in two dimensions to the shape and size of the greeting card when folded and being integral with a portion of the greeting card.
2. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in claim 1 wherein the container is in the form of a bag.
3. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in claim 1 wherein the container is in the form of a box having at least a base and a plurality of side walls.
4. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the container has an opening along a top edge.
5. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in claim 4 wherein the container further includes closure means for closing the opening along the top edge of the container.
6. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in claim 5 wherein the closure means is in the form of a lid.
7. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the container is adapted to be folded flat when empty.
8. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the container is conformed so as to enable a bottle to be contained therein.

- 9 -

9. An integral greeting card and container as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein there is further provided an envelope into which the integral greeting card and container may be placed.

Fig.1.

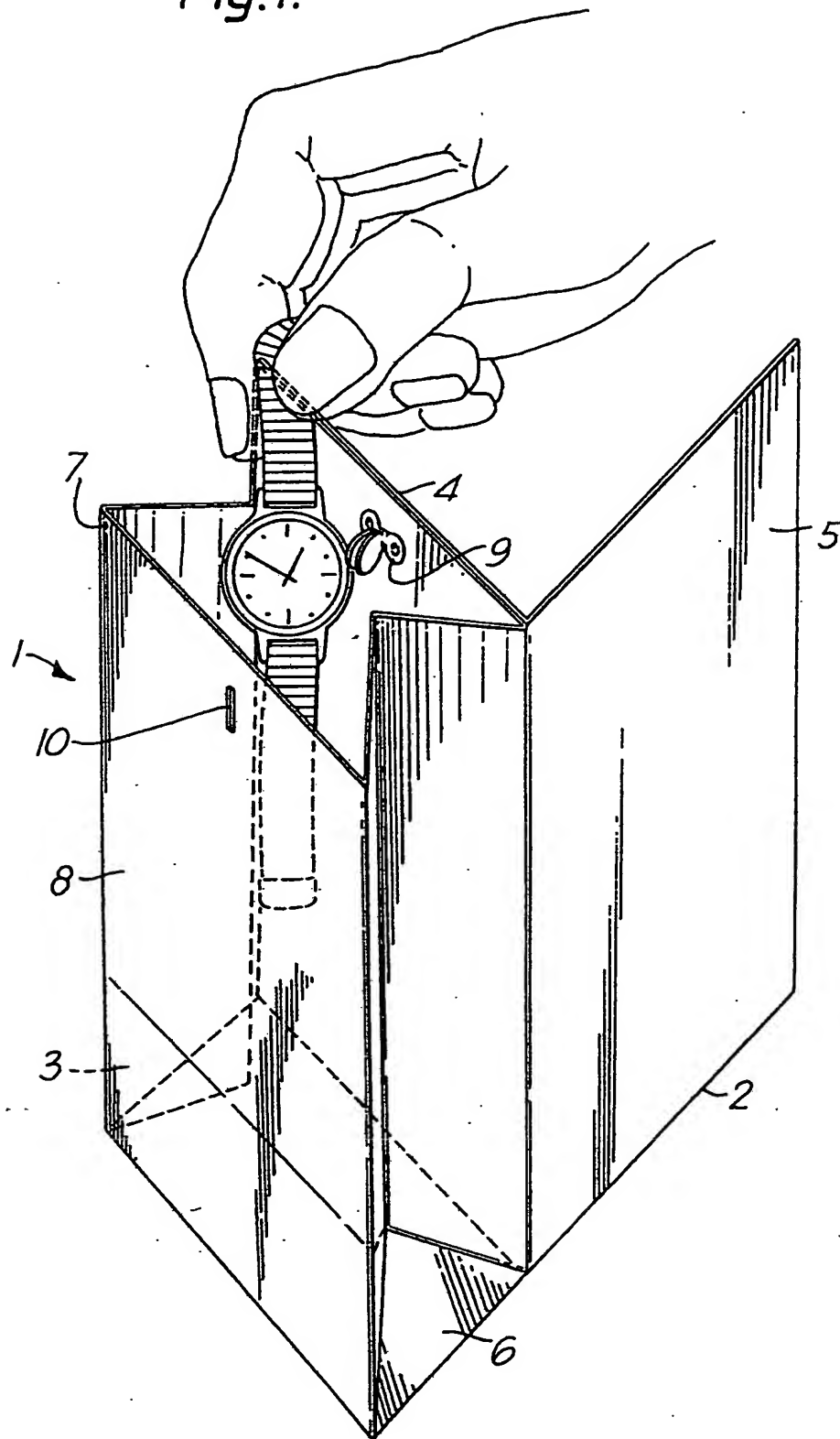


Fig.2.

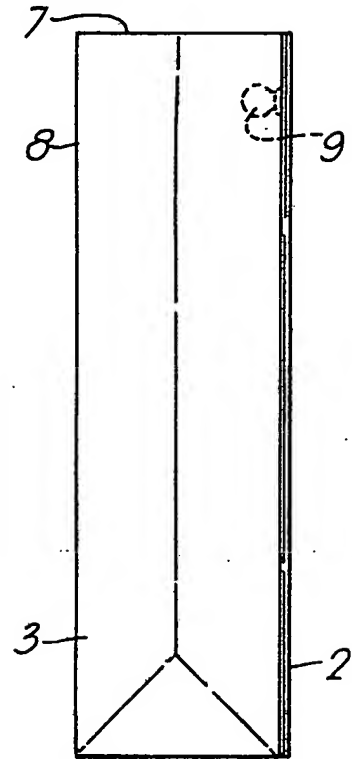


Fig.3.

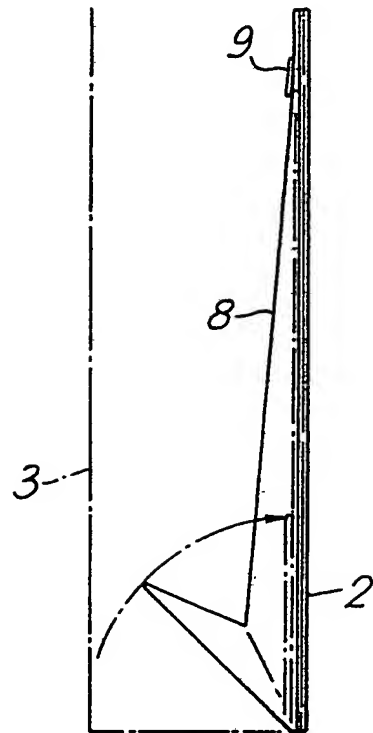
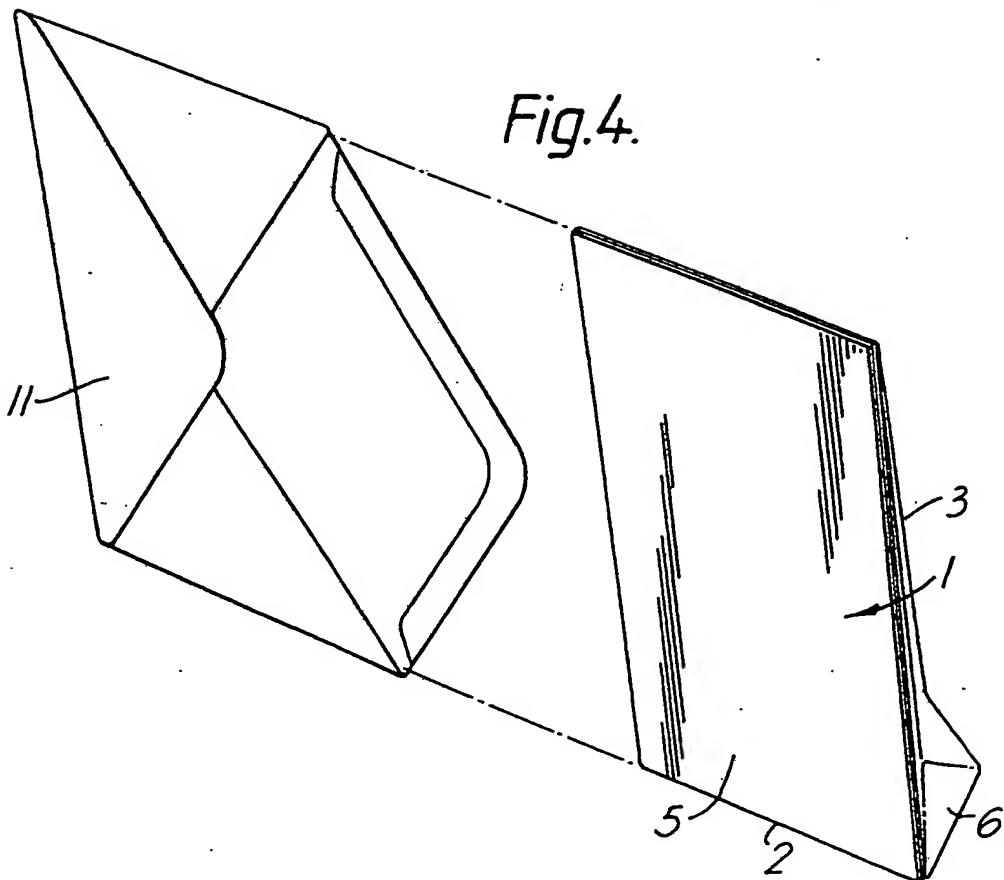


Fig.4.



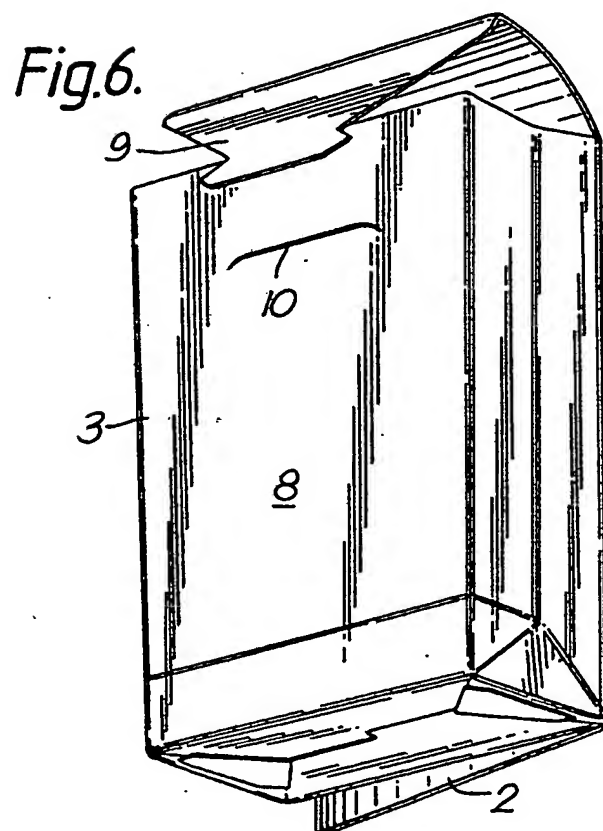
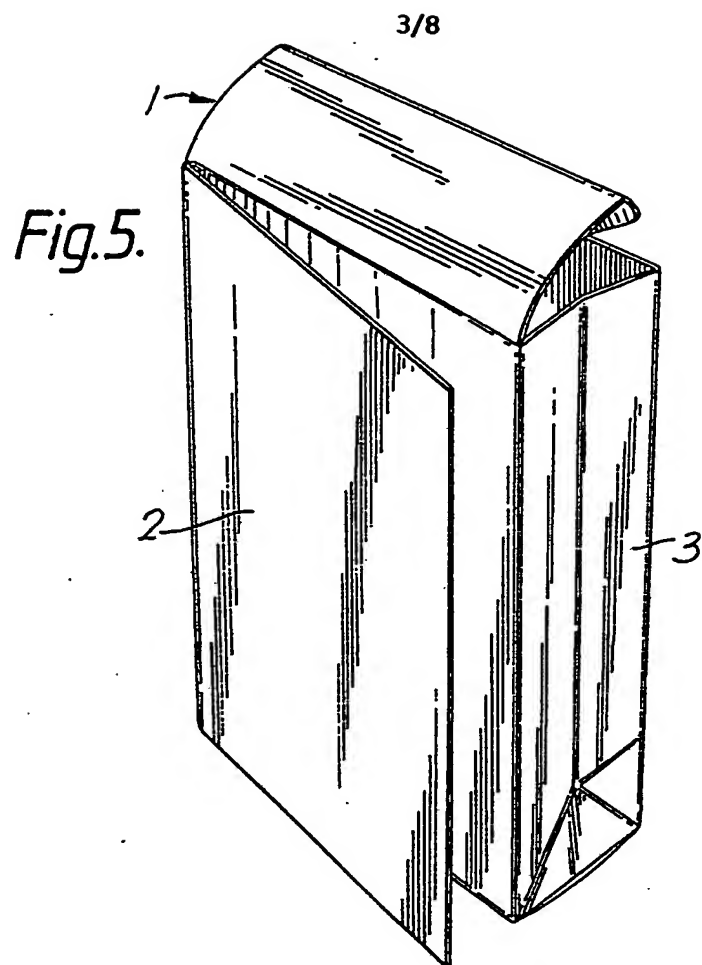


Fig.7.

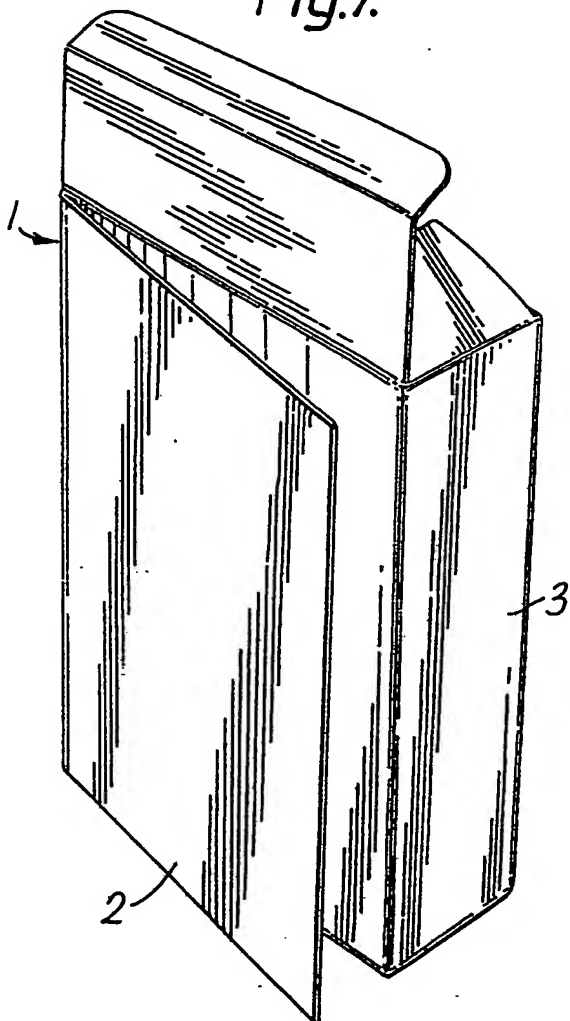
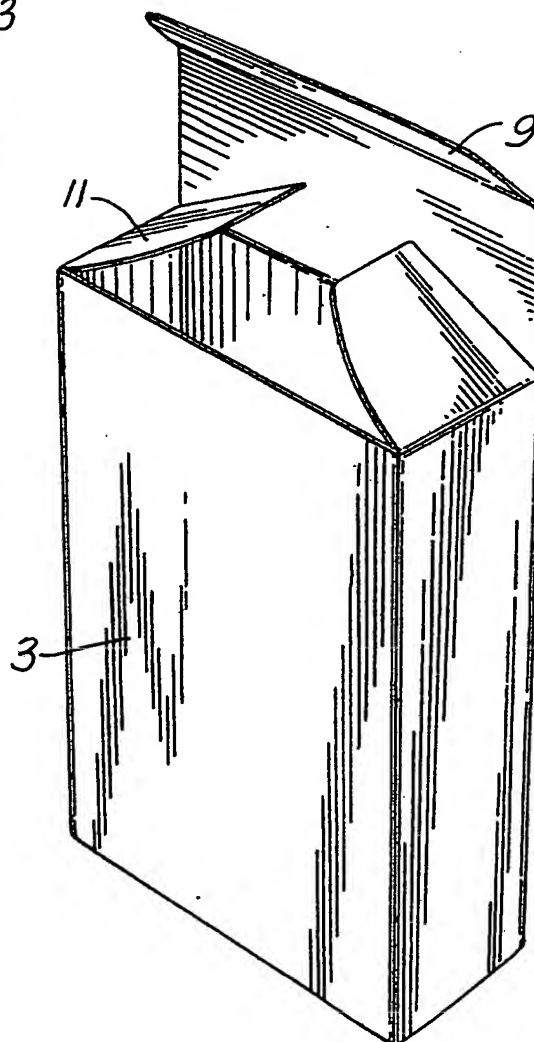


Fig.8.



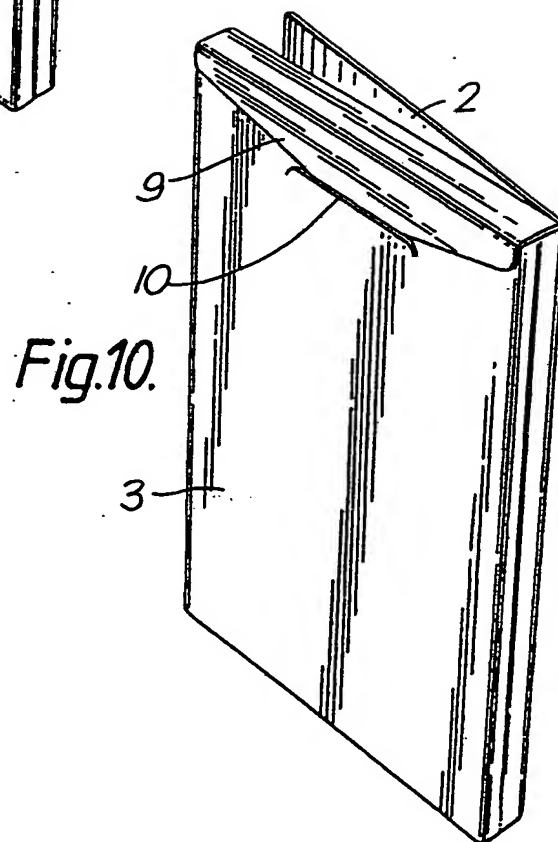
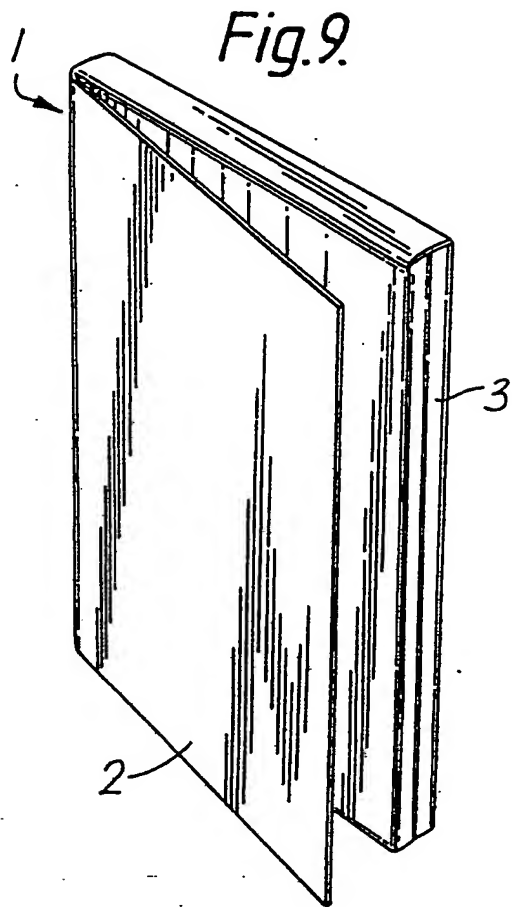


Fig.11.

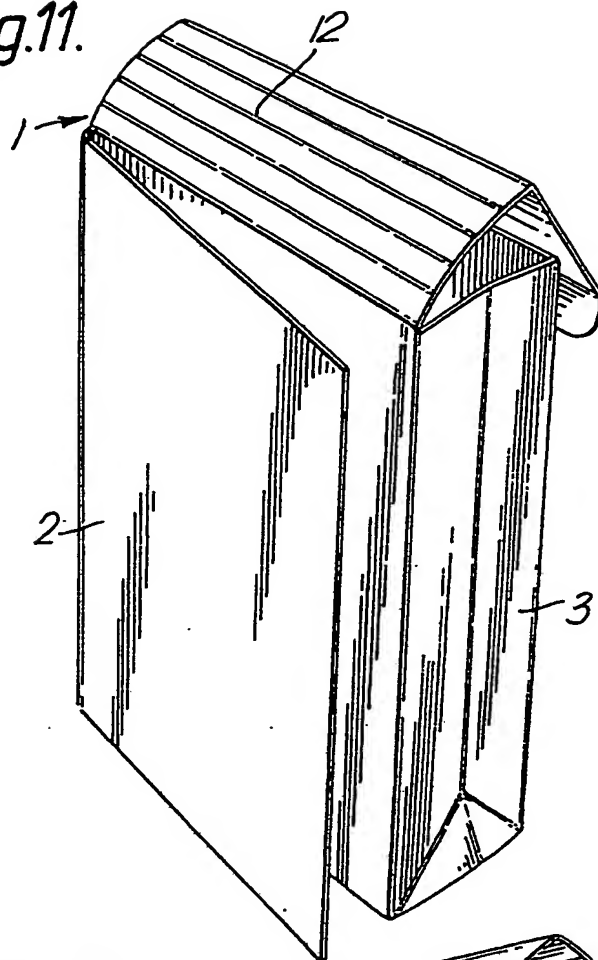
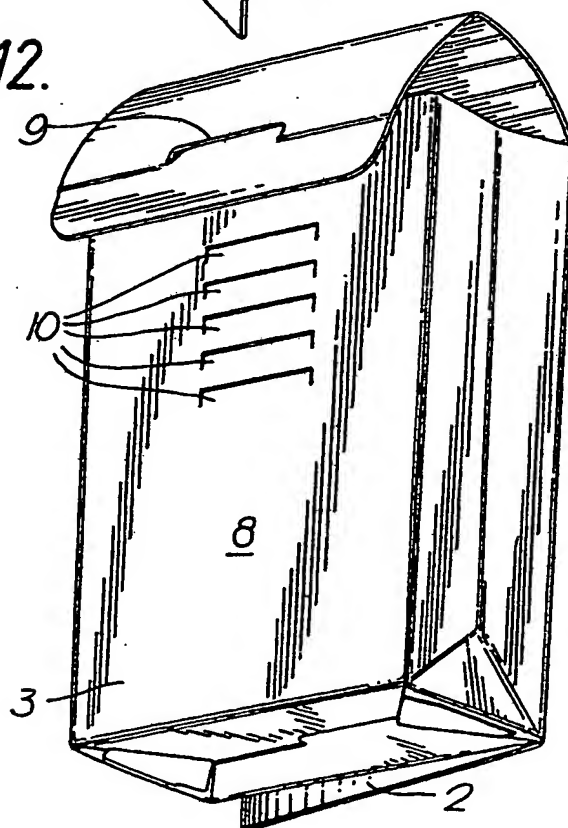


Fig.12.



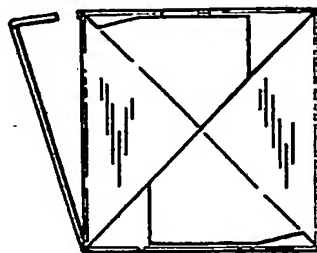
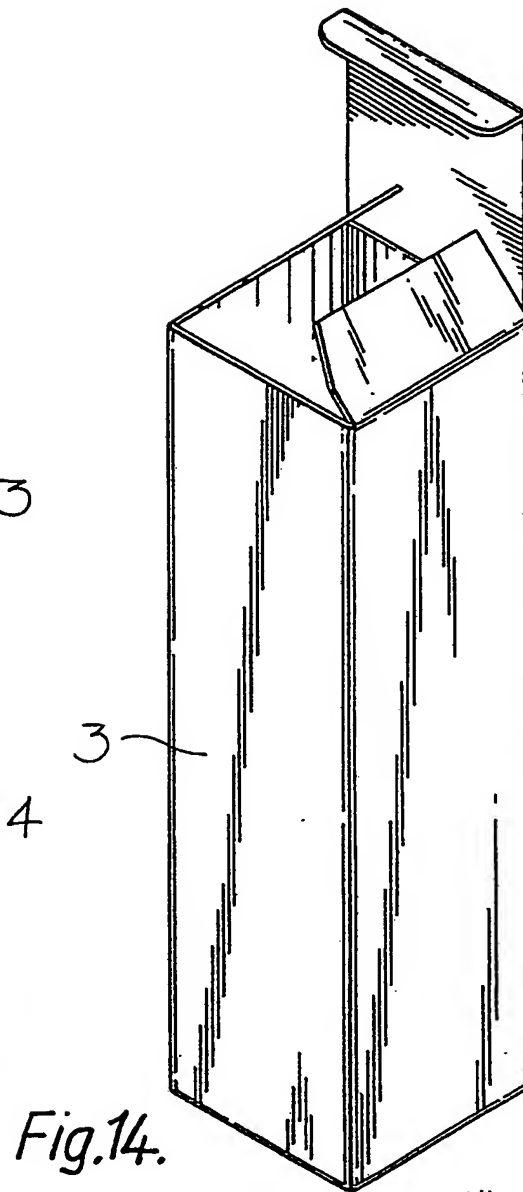
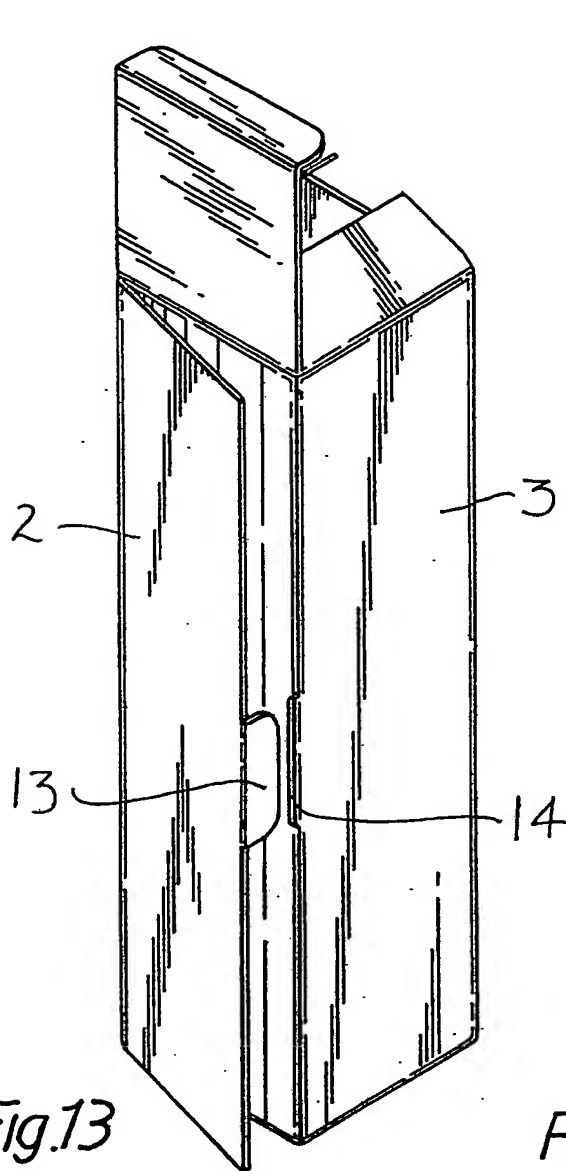
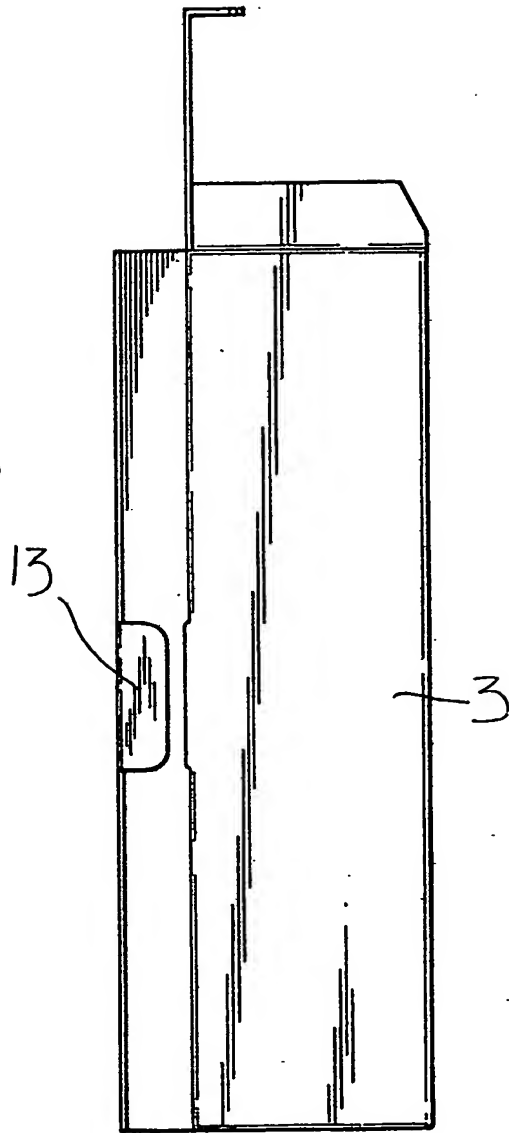
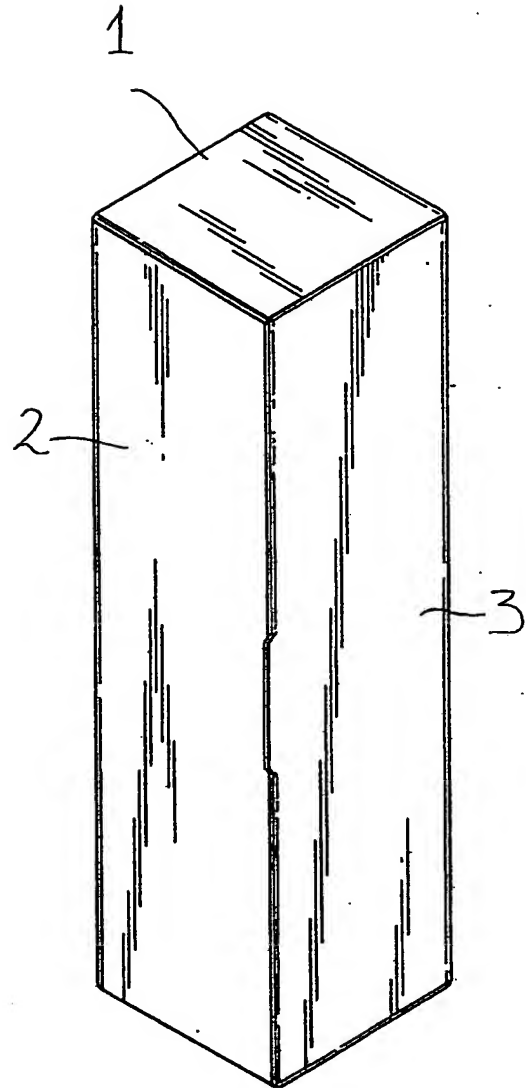


Fig. 15.

*Fig.16.**Fig.17.*

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

PCT/GB 93/01025

International Application No

I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (If several classification symbols apply, indicate all)⁶

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC

Int.Cl. 5 B42D15/04

II. FIELDS SEARCHEDMinimum Documentation Searched⁷

Classification System

Classification Symbols

Int.Cl. 5

B42D

Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation
to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched⁸**III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT⁹**

Category ¹⁰	Citation of Document, ¹¹ with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages ¹²	Relevant to Claim No. ¹³
X	EP,A,0 220 827 (P. L. PRINTS LIMITED) 6 May 1987 see the whole document	1-9
X	DE,U,8 320 406 (WOHLFAHRT) 3 November 1983 see the whole document	1-9
X	WO,A,9 206 853 (SECOND NATURE LIMITED) 30 April 1992 see the whole document	1-9
A	US,A,4 840 275 (FAIOLA ET AL.) 20 June 1989 see the whole document	1
A	CH,A,480 953 (ELISABETH SCHWIZER-BÜHLER) 15 November 1969 see the whole document	1
	-/-	

¹⁰ Special categories of cited documents :¹⁰ "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance¹⁰ "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date¹⁰ "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)¹⁰ "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means¹⁰ "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed¹⁰ "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention¹⁰ "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step¹⁰ "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.¹⁰ "A" document member of the same patent family**IV. CERTIFICATION**

Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search

24 SEPTEMBER 1993

Date of Mailing of this International Search Report

05. 10. 93

International Searching Authority

EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE

Signature of Authorized Officer

MEULEMANS J.P.

III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT (CONTINUED FROM THE SECOND SHEET)		
Category *	Citation of Document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to Claim No.
X	FR,A,2 141 501 (PIRON CLAUDIUS ET ROSSET JEAN) 26 January 1973 see the whole document	1
A	GB,A,755 507 (DRING LIMITED) 22 August 1956 see the whole document	1
A	DE,A,3 644 398 (DINGWERTH) 7 July 1988 see the whole document	1

**ANNEX TO THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
ON INTERNATIONAL PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

GB 9301025
SA 74359

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
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DE-U-8320406	03-11-83	None	
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US-A-4840275	20-06-89	None	
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